

THE MELFORD RURAL DISTRICT

IN THE ADMINISTRATIVE COUNTY OF WEST SUFFOLK.

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH FOR 1945

SECTION A.

1.—Statistics and Social Conditions.

Area 47,270 acres.

Population (Registrar General's estimate) 11,790.

No. of inhabited houses 3,497.

2.—Extracts of Vital Statistics of the year.

LIVE BIRTHS.	} Legitimate,	M.	F.	Live Birth Rate per 1000, 15.2. England & Wales, 16.1
		81	71	
	} Illegitimate,	18	10	
TOTAL ...		99	81	

STILL	{	Legitimate,	3	2	Rate per 1000 population, 0.42. England & Wales, 0.46 Rate per 1000 total births, 27.0
BIRTHS.		Illegitimate,	0	0	
TOTAL ...			3	2	

DEATHS.	} Male, Female	73 96	Death Rate } Gross 14.3. England & Wales, 11.4
TOTAL ...		169	

(A) Number of women dying in consequence of child-birth	} from sepsis ... 1 other causes ... 0	} Rate per 1000 total births 5.7
TOTAL		1

(B) Deaths of infants under one year of age.	Legitimate 0	Illegitimate 1	... ..	Total 1
All infants per 1000 live births, 5.5. England & Wales, 46				
Legitimate infants per 1000 Legitimate live births, 0				
Illegitimate infants per 1000 Illegitimate live births, 35.7				

(C) Deaths from Cancer (all ages)	... ..	M 11	F 17	... ..	Total 28
(D) " " Measles (all ages)	... ..	0			
(E) " " Whooping Cough (all ages)	... ..	0			
(F) " " Diarrhoea (under 2 years of age)	... ..	M 0	F 0	... ..	Total 0

SECTION B.

General Provisions of Health Services.

A. PUBLIC HEALTH OFFICERS OF THE LOCAL AUTHORITY.

Medical Officer of Health—part time.

Sanitary Inspector—one—whole time—Cert. S.I.B., M.S.I.A.

One full time Assistant Sanitary Inspector—Cert. S.I.B., M.S.I.A.

J. A. E. Burrows, Cert. S.I.B. Certified Inspector of Meat and other Foods, appointed December 1st, 1944.

B. LABORATORY FACILITIES. No change.

SECTION C.

Sanitary Conditions in the Area.

WATER SUPPLIES—PRIVATE.

Outside the area served by the Council's Mains most properties obtain their supplies from shallow wells. A small number rely upon uncovered "springs."

13 visits of inspection were made following complaints.

13 samples submitted for chemical analysis.

2 " " " " and bacteriological examination.

6 sources of supply found unfit.

The supplies found to be contaminated were from 5 wells and a stream. Two of the wells were closed and a standpipe from the Council's Mains provided in each instance. One well was thoroughly cleaned out and later gave a satisfactory sample. In the remaining two cases satisfactory alternative sources of drinking water were found, a mains supply not being available.

With regard to the stream the pollution was caused by the effluent from an overworked sewage disposal plant at a nearby Air Station. Following correspondence with the Department concerned the installation was overhauled and the stream cleansed.

PUBLIC WATER SUPPLIES.

During the past year the Council's water supplies have been most satisfactory, no shortage have been experienced from the boreholes. A very large number of residents have taken advantage of the main supplies there are now 1,814 houses connected, 760 have a Laid On supply and 1,054 dwellings are served by standpipe, four samples were taken and all reports stated that supplies were of the highest organic and bacteriological purity and quite fit for drinking purposes, all supplies are sterilised by Sodium Hypochlorite solution by means of a small injection pump to 0.2 parts per million, no main extensions were made during the year.

The consumption per head of the population on the various schemes are as follows:

CENTRAL AREA SCHEME, serving the parishes of Gt. Cornard, Long Melford, Acton, Gt. Waldingfield, Newton and Assington. 13.25 gallons per head per day.

STOKE-BY-NAYLAND SCHEME, serving the parishes of Stoke and Nayland. 8.08 gallons per head per day.

BURES ST. MARY'S SCHEME, the water is supplied to this Council by the Lexden & Winstree R.D.C. in bulk. 6.05 gallons per head per day.

GLEMSFORD WATER SCHEME. Consumption 9.9 gallons per head per day.

The total amount of water supplied by all Stations for all purposes was 70,239,000 gallons.

PARISHES OF SHIMPLING & LAWSHALL. Owing to the shortage it is still necessary to cart water for domestic purposes daily, as a precautionary measure the supply is chlorinated to .3 parts per million.

In the very near future the Water Dept. will take over this work themselves, when the supply will be obtained from the public mains at Melford.

DRAINAGE AND SEWERAGE.

There has been no substantial change from the conditions set out in the last Report.

The need for proper systems of sewage disposal in the larger parishes remains acute and the Council's Consulting Engineers have proceeded with the preparation of schemes for the parishes listed in the last report, to which Stanstead may be added, as it is proposed to link this village with the Glemsford Scheme. Six separate disposal works are proposed to serve the ten parishes.

PUBLIC CLEANSING.

As in previous years contracts for the removal of house refuse and night soil have been in operation for the parishes of Long Melford and Bures St. Mary. The emptying of cesspools is not included in the contracts. In Long Melford an average of 530 pail closets and 4 privies are emptied per month and 70 loads of refuse collected. The corresponding figures for Bures St. Mary are—224 pail closets, 1 privy and 20 loads of refuse.

A scheme is in hand for the collection of house-refuse throughout the District as soon as circumstances permit.

NUISANCES.

34 visits were made to investigate complaints of nuisances, most of them arising from foul ditches receiving house drainage. They were all dealt with without recourse to statutory action.

HOUSING.

In addition to those carried out under the general Housing Survey mentioned below, 87 visits were made with regard to repairs, etc. Difficulty is being experienced in persuading some owners to carry out essential repairs to maintain in a weatherproof condition cottages which would in normal times be dealt with under Section 11 or 25 of the Housing Act, 1936. Many families are living in deplorable conditions. There seems no prospect of any immediate improvement in this direction because even where the owners are willing to carry out repairs there is often great difficulty in getting them done.

RURAL HOUSING SURVEY.

In accordance with the instructions from the Ministry of Health, this survey, to obtain a picture of the probable future housing needs in the District has been commenced. 772 houses have been surveyed and the results recorded and tabulated. The results to the end of the year may be summarised as follows :

Houses reasonably fit	...	...	148
Houses needing minor repairs	...	...	247
Houses needing major repairs	...	...	242
Probably worthy of reconditioning	...	...	55
Impossible to repair at a reasonable cost	...	...	80

SECTION D.

INSPECTION OF MEAT & OTHER FOODS.

There is a Government-controlled Slaughterhouse in this area, and this was visited on 179 occasions. 25,244 lbs of carcase meat and 35,610 lbs of offals were condemned as unfit for human consumption. Of these quantities 43,473 lbs were affected with tuberculosis, including the entire carcasses with all offals of 23 cows, 3 heifers, 4 steers, 1 bull, 1 calf and 2 pigs.

At the Ministry of Food Distribution Depot 624 lbs of canned corned beef and 240 lbs of canned corn mutton were found to be unfit, largely because of the accidental perforation of tins during packing or transit, or because of the rusting through of the containers during storage. This amount is very small when the total quantity passing through the Depot is considered.

The following foodstuffs were condemned on wholesale and retail premises :

Various Meats & Meat Preparations	...	...	1219 tins
Fish & Fish Preparations	..	...	46 „
Milk (Condensed)	..	...	55 „
Various Vegetables	..	...	57 „
Fresh Oranges	...	...	1 case
Dates	...	...	70½ lbs.
Seedless Raisins	...	...	25 „
Butter	...	...	17 „
Bacon	...	...	10 „
Sweets	...	...	7 „

The first item on this list includes 1,200 tins of chopped ham released in error from an Emergency Food Store where the tins had been affected by damp to such an extent as to make the contents unsafe for human consumption. They were salvaged for animal feeding stuffs.

MILK PRODUCTION.

The position generally shows little change from previous years. A number of farmers are carrying out schemes to bring their premises and herds up to the standard required for producing a "Designated" Milk. In this connection there is full co-operation between the Council's Sanitary Inspector and the County Milk Officer.

SECTION E.

RODENT CONTROL.

The Council have accepted from the County Council delegated powers under the Rats and Mice (Destruction) Act, 1919.

From the beginning of the year until his resignation in May the Council's Rodent Operator was loaned to the Borough of Sudbury. A fresh appointment was made on the 15th October, and during the remaining two months of the year the following work was carried out :

Survey and Enquiries	...	...	...	446 visits
Baiting and Poisoning	...	...	...	50 „
Estimated Kill (according to Ministry of Food formula)				959 rats
No. of dead rats actually found	...	...	...	141

The Council's original scale of charges was found to bear rather heavily on the occupiers of small cottage property. A revised rate of 3/6 per hour for the time the Operator is on the property has been found more acceptable. There has been good co operation from householders generally and it has not been necessary to use statutory powers to enforce disinfection.

VERMIN DISINFESTATION.

Reports of infestations of vermin were received from the occupiers of five houses. The houses were visited and bugs found in three and fleas in the remaining two. All were relatively mild cases, and the rooms and bedding concerned were thoroughly treated with liquid insecticide and the pests eradicated. Only one Council-house was involved.

SECTION F.

Prevalence of Infectious Diseases.

CASES NOTIFIED.

Disease	No. Notified	Admitted to Hospital	Deaths
Scarlet Fever	9	3	0
Diphtheria	3	3	0
Whooping Cough	11	0	0
Measles	144	0	0
Pneumonia	13	0	3
Erysipelas	3	0	0

SCARLET FEVER.

Of these 9 cases, 3 were in one house. The other 6 were sporadic in nature and untraced.

WHOOPING COUGH.

These were all scattered both as to time and place.

DIPHTHERIA

All sporadic and untraced.

MEASLES.

Two epidemics are represented in these figures. One in Nayland & District and one in Melford & District.

INFECTIOUS DISEASES AGE INCIDENCE.

Age Periods.	Measles		Whooping Cough		Diphtheria		Erysipelas		Scarlet Fever	
	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.
Under one year	1	3	...	1	...	...	1	...	...	...
1—5	24	22	3	4	...	...	...	...	1	1
5—10	33	32	1	2	...	...	...	...	...	2
10—15	7	2	...	...	...	...	...	...	2	1
15—20	2	3	..	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
20—25 ... ..	...	1	...	...	..	...	...	...	1	...
25—30	1	2	...	...	...	2	..	..	...	1
35— ... ..	...	..	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
45—	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
55— ... ..	...	...	...	...	1	...	...	1	...	..
65 and over ... ..	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	...	...	..
Total	69	75	4	7	1	2	2	1	4	5
	144		11		3		3		9	

1945.

TUBERCULOSIS.

New notifications, number 18; Pulmonary 10 and Non-Pulmonary 7.
Transfers into district, number 7; Pulmonary 5 and Non Pulmonary 2.

AGE INCIDENCE.

Age Periods.				New Cases.			
				Pulmonary		Non-Pulmonary	
				M.	F.	M.	F.
Under one year ... ..	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
1— ... ..	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
5— ... ..	...	...	...	...	...	...	1
10— ... ..	...	...	...	...	...	2	1
15— ... ..	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
20— ... ..	...	...	...	3	...	...	1
25— ... ..	...	...	...	...	1	...	...
35— ... ..	...	...	...	1	2	...	...
45— ... ..	...	...	...	3	...	..	...
55— ... ..	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
65 and over ... ..	...	...	...	1	...	...	2
Total				8	3	2	5
				11		7	

Deaths: None due to Pulmonary tuberculosis and 2 only due to other forms.

R W. RIX, M.O.H.

